

VZCZCXRO4752
PP RUEHQU
DE RUEHPU #0288/01 0431132
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 121132Z FEB 07
FM AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5322
INFO RUEHZH/HAITI COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA PRIORITY 1409
RUEHSA/AMEMBASSY PRETORIA PRIORITY 1232
RUEHQU/AMCONSUL QUEBEC PRIORITY 0711
RUMIAAA/HQ USSOUTHCOM J2 MIAMI FL PRIORITY
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 1124

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 PORT AU PRINCE 000288

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

STATE FOR WHA/EX AND WHA/CAR
S/CRS
SOUTHCOM ALSO FOR POLAD
STATE PASS AID FOR LAC/CAR
INR/IAA (BEN-YEHUDA)
WHA/EX PLEASE PASS USOAS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [PINR](#) [HA](#)

SUBJECT: LAVALASIAN OPS STRIVE TO STAY IN THE GANG

REF: PORT AU PRINCE 1250

PORT AU PR 00000288 001.2 OF 002

11. (U) Summary: Lavalasian "popular organizations" (OPs) such as PLANOP (National Platform of Progressive Popular Organizations) continue to make demands on the government in radio interviews and in street demonstrations, including asking for the return of Aristide and the departure of MINUSTAH. PLANOP also tries to position itself as an intermediary between the gangs and the international community and as key allies of local government. PLANOP's and other OPs' relevance appears to be diminishing, however, as MINUSTAH and the GoH move to directly confront the gangs and implement social programs. Additionally, with the population at large appearing to remain mostly indifferent or opposed to the Lavalas message, other grass roots organizations appear to be replacing the old OPs. End Summary.

5 Demands for the GoH

12. (U) Eranel Fameux and Yvon Etienne, two members of an "organisation populaire" (see ref A) named PLANOP operating in Cite Soleil, outlined their demands and described the current situation on the ground in Cite Soleil to Poloff on January 24. The group claims to be an umbrella organization for a number of citizen groups in Cite Soleil, including the Organization of Fishermen of Cite Soleil and the Committee to Maintain Order in Cite Soleil. The group's platform has five major demands, mainly directed toward the central government. (Note: These demands are common among Lavalas partisans in the Port-au-Prince slums. End Note.) The first demand is that the government improve the "miserable conditions" in which people live. Problems outlined by PLANOP include hunger, lack of education, poor sanitation, and little or no access to clean water. The second demand is that the government reinstall workers whose jobs were taken away under the interim government. (Note: Many of these workers were on the payroll of public utilities under former-President Jean Bertrand Aristide, but did not actually work at those offices. End Note.) The next item on the group's agenda is to secure the release of their imprisoned friends whom they believe have been jailed unjustly. The group would also like

to see MINUSTAH leave Haiti. They claim that the Haitian National Police, with assistance from PLANOP, could fill the void left by the departure of the peacekeeping force. Last but not least, PLANOP is demanding the return of Former President Jean Bertrand Aristide.

Liaising with the Gangs

¶3. (U) The PLANOP representatives made no secret of their relationship with Cite Soleil gang leaders. They said they sit down with the gangs often to talk and encourage them to put down their weapons. (Note: The representatives of PLANOP who met with Poloff were seen on national television alongside well-known gang leaders Amaral and Evans. End Note.) Attempting to characterize their association with the gangs as a benefit, the representatives offered to work with USAID and other international donors to show them how to "get things done" in Cite Soleil. They were adamant that MINUSTAH and the HNP cannot control Cite Soleil alone and that they need help from "civil society" groups like PLANOP, in this case meaning help smoothing things over with the gang leaders.

Local Government Taking Root?

¶4. (U) Poloff inquired as to the role of local government, namely the mayor, in Cite Soleil. Again, the PLANOP representatives reiterated that they would play an integral role in helping the new mayor do his job because of their intimate knowledge of the area. They pointed to the apparent victory of the heretofore unknown political party "Pel ak Pikwa" (Shovel and Pick) as evidence that the population is ready to accept local government in place of gang leadership.

PORT AU PR 00000288 002.2 OF 002

PLANOP intends to support the new mayor as he formulates an "emergency plan" for security. (Note: Endependans, not "Pel ak Pikwa", won the mayor's race in Cite Soleil, according to official election results. End Note.)

¶5. (U) Comment: Though often equated with civil society or grassroots organizations, under Aristide OPs became the mechanisms through which he dispersed patronage and, by arming them, intimidated his enemies (ref A). Because Preval has admirably abandoned these practices, PLANOP is struggling to maintain a niche in post-Aristide Haiti. Though leaders associated with PLANOP and other OPs played a role in establishing stability in 2005 for the electoral registration and ensuing elections, President Preval's direct involvement in negotiations with the gangs -- and later his abandonment of those negotiations -- effectively marginalized these groups. This probably explains Fameux's and Ettiene's pursuit of Emboffs, as they search for ways to maintain their stature and influence in their community.

¶6. (SBU) Comment Continued. This leaves the OPs with little besides traditional Lavalasian politics to fall back on; however, that too appears to be increasingly ineffective. Post's most recent polling data from November shows that only 5% of Haitians support Famni Lavalas nationally, and Lavalas candidates combined polled 13th out of all parties standing in December's local elections. Increasingly, more responsible civil society groups appear to be filling the void left by the out-of-touch OPs. As has happened in the Port-au-Prince neighborhood of Bel Air, these groups have mostly abandoned pointless Lavalasian rhetoric and now concentrate instead on partnering with the GoH and international donors to improve their living conditions.

SANDERSON